



Salmon Lake State Park Indian Education For All Lesson Plan

Title

Ancient Highways-Native Byways of Salmon Lake State Park

Content Area(s)

Social Studies; Media Literacy

Grade Level

8th

Duration

45 minutes to 1 hour (one class period)

Goals (Montana Standards/Essential Understandings)

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING 1: There is great diversity among the 12 tribal Nations of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories and governments. Each Nation has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.

Social Studies Content Standard 4: Students demonstrate an understanding of the effects of time, continuity, and change on historical and future perspectives and relationships.

Speaking and Listening Content Standard 4: Students identify, analyze, and evaluate the impacts of effective speaking and evaluative listening.

Reading Content Standard 5: Students gather, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of sources, and communicate their findings in ways appropriate for their purposes and audiences

Overview

In this lesson plan students will use information provided and gathered from various sources to learn about the use of an extensive traditional trail system by Native American people. Students will have the opportunity to compare this ancient trail system with the modern transportation system. Students will also learn the different types of information archaeologist use to locate and map prehistoric Indian trails.

Objectives

The students will learn:

- What kind of terrain is the best for a trail location; and
- What different factors are considered by archaeologists as they identify prehistoric trails.

Students will develop skill in these areas:

- Mapping, analysis, comparison, making decisions and drawing conclusions

Assumptions

The lesson plan assumes students have an understanding that there are differences that makes certain terrain easier to cross than other terrain. They should also understand what kinds of landscape features they would likely encounter and use if they traveled from one part of the state to another.

Teacher Preparation

- Teacher should read the following resources; *Ancient Trails of Montana, Archaeology and Ancient Trails* and selected entries from *The Journals and Letters of Major John Owen, Pioneer of the Northwest, 1850-1871(Blackfeet and Fort Owen)* for information about tribal interaction. (both provided in lesson plan)
- Teachers will need to gather the materials for the lesson (Materials Needed) and get familiar with the map(s), worksheet and other materials used in the lesson.

Materials or Resources Needed

- Ancient Trails of Montana – Resource page (one per student and one for the teacher)
- Activity Worksheet (one per student)
- Ancient Highways - Native Byways Map of Montana (one per student)
- Student notebooks, pencils/pens, paper, classroom board
- Montana Ancient Teaching Curriculum; *Lesson 1A-Narrative: What is Archaeology?*
- *Archaeology and Ancient Trails* Resource sheet (one per student and one for the teacher)
- Blackfeet and Fort Owen Resource sheet

Activities and Procedures

Warm up

To determine what the students already know about ancient trails and archaeology, ask the following questions and record the responses on one half of the board.

1. If you were to travel across Montana, in prehistoric times, what kind of terrain would you see?
2. What kinds of landscape features would you look for to help you on this trip?
Pass out *Lesson 1A-Narrative: What is Archaeology?* and *Archaeology and Ancient Trails* Resource sheet. Have the students read the material. Record answers on other half of board.
3. What clues do archaeologists look for when they are searching for ancient sites?
4. What are some natural landscape features that are important to consider when looking for ancient trails?

5. What manmade features are important to consider when trying to identify an ancient trail?

Learning*

1. Give the students copies of: *Ancient Highways - Native Byways Map of Montana*. Take a few minutes to make sure that they look at the supplied resources, *What is Archaeology?* and *Archaeology and Ancient Trails*.
2. Tell the students that they are archaeologists for a day. Using what they now know about how archaeologists identify prehistoric trails, and the information provided on the map, draw where they think the trail would go, connecting the X site to the dots on the map. (They should not just draw a straight line between the points.)
3. Have students complete the Activity Sheet as they map their routes.
*This activity can be done in small groups.

Closing

1. Choose a couple of students to share their routes with the class. Was the same route chosen by everyone? Did one seem better than the others?
2. Discuss why some trails are used over and over again.

Trails are used again and again because they follow resources and they become familiar. The first non-native visitors followed old Indian trails because they were situated in areas where they could utilize resources. Like today, when taking a trip, people often go the same way, familiar with the "road resources" like rest areas, towns, etc.

3. Discuss what an archaeologist learns from studying ancient trails.

Archaeologists who study ancient trails can learn about how cultures moved from one region to another, their trade routes, as well as how people moved across the region seasonally to get the resources they needed to survive.

Extensions

- Invite a Salish Tribal Member to your classroom to learn about the language and tribal history
- Using a Montana Highway map, compare the trail routes chosen by the students and compare with modern transportation routes.
- Websites with related information
 - Driving Bison and Blackfoot Science*
 - www.notitia.com/bison/
 - Russel Lawrence Barsh, Chantelle Marlor; Human Ecology, Vol. 31, 2003
 - www.head-smashed-in.com/

www.buffalotjump.org/ Wahkpa Chu'gn archaeological site- a 2,000-year-old buffalo jump

<http://www.royalalbertamuseum.ca/human/archaeo/aspects/buffalo.htm>

Check out these great books to learn more about Salish and Kootenai people and their use of the ancient trails.

Coyote stories of the Montana Salish Indians by Johnny Arlee

Salish Kootenai College Press , 1999.

Stories From our Elders

Salish Culture Committee Publications

In the Name of the Salish & Kootenai Nation

Bigart,, Robert, Clarence Woodcock ed. Salish Kootenai College Press 1996

Indian Trails of the Northern Rockies by Darris Flanagan - Stoneydale Press

Glossary for Lesson

Archaeologist: a scientist who studies human beings of the past, using techniques and methods centered on the examination and interpretation of physical remains left behind by past cultures.

Archaeological site: any location of past human activity, evidenced by the remains of that activity.

Cache pit: hole dug into the ground for storage of food, stone for tools, or other objects until needed.

Divide: a ridge or section of high ground between two basins or areas of drainage; a watershed. The Continental Divide is one example in Montana.

Ethnographic record: accounts of events and practices from the people who were there or the people who engaged in the activity described.

Historic: the time period for which written documentation exists.

Prehistoric: the time period before written history.

Raw material: natural resource suitable for development or refinement by humans but in or nearly in an unaltered state; examples are stone, wood, grass, clay, and bone.

Stone cairn: rocks intentionally stacked to mark a spot.

Terrain: the physical features of a tract of land.

EVALUATION:

Discussion/observation Completed Worksheet
Participation Class Presentation

Ancient Highways – Native Byways Activity Sheet

Name _____

1. Discuss two or more naturally occurring landscape features that are important in choosing a route across that terrain.
2. Name at least two other features that archaeologists use to help them find ancient trails.
3. What are possible problems archaeologists encounter when trying to identify ancient trails?
4. What do archaeologists learn for studying ancient trails?
5. What were some of the factors you used as you mapped your trail, and why did you use them?

Blackfeet and Fort Owen

Selected journal entries

From: Dunbar, Seymour, Paul C. Phillips ed. *The Journals and Letters of Major John Owen, Pioneer of the Northwest, 1850-1871.* Edward Eberstadt New York 1927 ; p. 1

September 15, 1852 – Horses stolen- Dodson killed (John F. Dodson came to FO in the spring of 1853 from Buffalo Grove, Illinois. He was putting up hay when killed by the Blackfeet. According to Duncan McDonald a Métis who was with him.)

October 3, 1853My old Nez Perce friend leaves me this morning. I made some small presents by way of keeping on the fair side for some time may need his services. The grass here is excellent and it would make a fine summering ground for stock out of reach of Blackfeet and I think I shall adopt it in future as best course to come together another good band of animals....

July 15, 1854 My animals taking advantage of the liberty I gave them last night went far. The horse guard returned after an hour or two's hunt without them. My suspicions were aroused.... The Blackfeet may have during the night entered into camp and run them off..

Nov 8th , 1854.. trade slow alarm of Blackfeet

Nov 20, 1854 Last night we were again alarmed by something stirring around the camp which the women and Manual swore it was Blackfeet.. we sat up watching and scouting around until we became satisfied that the alarm was false

Feb 28, 1855 .. saw no Blackfeet except the last day they were fired upon by a war party some 15 miles up Hells gate defile.. they were following the camp, no doubt.

May 11 1856.. The Blackfeet came down this morning on their way home. I was surprised by at the present I received from Keitse Pem Sa which was a fine English Double Barrel gun with some 18 balls for the same.. I took it but had nothing to give him in return but gave him to understand I would not forget.....

May 18, 1856 Late last evening had another arrival of Blackfeet, two men and two women, one of the men was dressed in the most fantastic manner and wore an English medal..

June 1, 1856 Some Blackfeet here this morning about starting home, exchanged a horse with one his being thin and tenderfooted Made them some trifling presents for the road

Mar 2, 1862 ..had a visit from old chief victor. He was giving me news from the camp at buffalo. He says his people are in most destitute condition. No game to subsist on, the Blackfeet are stealing their horses and some sickness and a few deaths.

December 13th , 1862 Men fixing up school room for the children which will commence on Monday morning. Had a visit from Old Chief Victor. I am building him a house close to the fort. This is the first time since I have known him, which has been 12 years, that he has not gone with his camp to buff. I dissuaded him from it last fall. He is quite old and affirm. I told him if he would remain with me, that he should have a good comfortable house to live in and a field to sow and plant for himself. Would that more of them would listen to the same wholesome arguments. But they are Indians and Indians they will ever remain. To Christianize, civilize and educate the Indian is a farce long since exploded. The dept at Washington knows no more about the management of the Indian tribe than the Indians do about the cause of the present war.

March 1 1868 News from the Flathead camp.. they are coming in.. Buffalo close and plenty Had some skirmishes with Blackfeet

[Frederic Remington's Image of the Frontier](#)

Journal article by Robert L. Stevens; Social Education, Vol. 65, 2001

... the Indian trade pioneered the way for civilization. The buffalo trail became the Indian trail, and this became the trader's "trace;" the trails widened into roads, and the roads into turnpikes, and these in turn were transformed into railroads ... In this progress, from savage conditions lie topics for the evolutionist.

[Reclaiming the Frontier: Oscar Micheaux as Black Turnerian](#)

Journal article by Dan Moos; African American Review, Vol. 36, 2002

[Frederick Jackson] Turner's sketch sets Native Americans at the front of his receding frontier line, laying the foundations for America's progress: "The buffalo trail became the Indian trail, and this became the trader's 'trace'; the trails widened into roads, and the roads into turnpikes, and these in turn were transformed into railroads"

[The Real River That Runs through It: Montana's Imperilled Blackfoot](#)

Magazine article by John B. Wright; Focus, Vol. 43, Spring 1993

The Blackfoot River flows westward across Montana from the Continental Divide to its confluence with the Clark Fork River five miles upstream from Missoula, as shown on the map of western Montana. The Blackfoot drainage once was used by Salish, Kootenai, Nez Perce, and other tribes as the "Going to the Buffalo Trail" to the Great Plains east of the mountains. Captain Meriwether Lewis traversed the canyon in 1806 and reported dense forests and abundant trout in the clear, fast-moving river.

[The Hunting of the Buffalo](#)

Book by E. Douglas Branch, J. Frank Dobie, Andrew C. Isenberg; University of Nebraska Press, 1997

Father de Smet once met seven Flathead Indians just returned from a hunt; they had killed one hundred and eighty-nine buffalo. One of these Flatheads had distinguished himself with three remarkable hits. Armed merely with a stone, he had pursued a cow, and on the run he had thrown the stone between the cow's horns, fatally; afterwards he had killed a second with his knife; and after crippling a large bull with a spear thrust, he had finished the job by strangling him.

[The Woman's Lodge: Constructing Gender on the Nineteenth-Century Pacific Northwest Plateau](#)

Journal article by Mary C. Wright; Frontiers - A Journal of Women's Studies, Vol. 24, 2003

.....as the people migrated from place to place on their seasonal food-procuring rounds. In May they may have been digging roots, but by late summer they would pick berries at another mountain location. In early spring and autumn they would congregate at the fishing sites, or alternately they hunted elk and deer.

Some traveled to the Plains to hunt buffalo.

Kootenai

KOOTENAI, indigenous group of North America

The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition 2004

Koot-nā, group of Native North Americans who in the 18th cent. occupied the so-called Kootenai country (i.e., N Montana, N Idaho, and SE British Columbia). Their language is thought by some scholars to form a branch of the Algonquian-Wakashan linguistic stock, although others argue that it has not been definitely related to any known linguistic family (see Native American languages). The Upper Kootenai lived near the headwaters of the Columbia River, and the Lower Kootenai lived on the Lower Kootenai River. According to tradition the Kootenai once lived E of the Rocky Mts., but they were driven westward by their enemies the Blackfoot. Kootenai culture was essentially that of the Plateau area, but after the advent of the horse the Kootenai adopted many Plains area traits including a seasonal buffalo hunt. Contact with whites began early in the 19th cent., when the North West Company established Rocky Mountain House on the upper Saskatchewan River. In 1807 the same company opened the first trading post in Kootenai country. The Kootenai are related to the Salish, with whom they share the Flathead Reservation in NW Montana. Another group of Kootenai live on a reservation in Idaho. In 1990 there were 750 Kootenai and about 2,300 people of mixed Salish and Kootenai descent in the United States, as well as some 500 Kootenai in Canada. Their name is sometimes spelled Kootenay or Kutenai

Salish

Encyclopedia article; *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Sixth Edition, 2004

.....indigenous people of North America, also known as the Flathead, who in the early 19th cent. inhabited the Bitterroot River valley of W Montana. Their language belongs to the Salishan branch of the Algonquian-Wakashan linguistic stock (see Native American languages). These people never practiced head flattening, but the Columbia River tribes who shaped the front of the head to create a pointed appearance spoke of their neighbors, the Salish, as "flatheads" in contrast. After the introduction of the horse the Salish adopted a Plains culture, including the hunting of buffalo and the use of the tepee.

From Wilderness to Statehood: A History of Montana, 1805-1900

Book by Merrill G. Burlingame, James McClellan Hamilton, Betty G. Ryan; Bindfords & Mort, 1957

Captain Lewis and party dropped down to the Hell Gate and ascended it to the mouth of the river which the Indians called the Road to the Buffalo Country, now the Blackfoot. At a distance of thirty miles an open prairie was passed which, on account of the number of scattered mounds or knobs, was named Knob Prairie. The Nez Perce and Blackfeet were enemies and here the guides expressed a desire to return to their people.

The Old North Trail: Or, Life, Legends, and Religion of the Blackfeet Indians

Book by Walter McClintock; University of Nebraska Press, 1992

When the Sun festival was finished and the Indians separated, I accompanied Siksikakoan to live on his Blackfoot ranch, not far from Mad Wolf's home on Cutbank River. I found him to be a man of fine mind and practical common sense, resourceful and fearless in emergencies and thoroughly equipped in all that goes to make an ideal guide and companion in the wilds. Under him I learned woodcraft, the handling of the broncho, the mysteries of the "diamond hitch" and the location of the old Indian trails leading across the plains and through the mountains

Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks

Book by Mark David Spence; Oxford University Press, 2000-*George Bird Grinnell and the Crown of the Continent*

On his first visit to northern Montana in 1885, Grinnell became instantly enamored of the mountains within the Blackfeet reservation. For the next several years, he returned to hunt and explore what he called the last remaining "wild and unknown portion" of the United States, and he published several articles about his adventures. In search of untrodden, pristine landscapes, Grinnell relied on Blackfeet guides and followed countless Indian trails to discover areas that he described as "absolutely virgin ground . . . with no sign of previous passage."

Archaeology and Ancient Trails

Prehistoric Trails

Did you ever wonder why a road follows a particular path? Many times the roads of today cover much older roads-trade routes, ways to good hunting grounds, or routes connecting Native American villages. Archaeologists looking for clues of these early trails study several things: the terrain, the nearness to raw materials, the presence of archaeological sites, and the ethnographic record.

Landscape

The terrain that a trail crosses can be very important. Both humans and animals will favor the easiest and/or most familiar path. A way to get from point A to point B without walking up and down the steepest hills or crossing the boggiest river bottom is the preferred way to go. Many trails follow along the divides that separate the major rivers. The major divide in Montana is the Continental Divide, which separates the two major river systems in Montana, the Missouri River system and the Columbia River system.

People often make trips to get supplies. In prehistoric times before people could go to a store, they moved along routes where they could collect the raw materials they needed-wood, stone, and clay to name a few. The Yellowstone Park area has stone that Native Americans used for making tools. The high plains of Montana provided grasses for shelters and bison for meat, hides, and bones that were turned into food, clothing, and tools for daily living. Water for drinking and cooking is always a critical factor; no one would want to set out on a long journey without knowing the location of the next water.

Archaeological Record

Archaeologists use manmade evidence to help identify prehistoric trails. One such clue is the presence of many archaeological sites in an area. The presence of numerous archaeological sites does not necessarily confirm the existence of a trail, especially along stream drainages that naturally tend to have a higher percentage of sites. However, when taken with other evidence at those sites, such as stone cairns, cache pits, and burials, higher site density may be a good indicator of a trail through a given area. The purpose of stone cairns is not always known, but they might serve as guides or markers. Cache pits, while commonly found at villages and camps, also can indicate a trail when they are not associated with house remains. Non-local materials found at sites may point to regional trade or seasonal movement across the prairie. Archaeologists also use ethnographic information to gain a better understanding of the uses and positions of earlier trails. Many of the trails, such as the Lewis and Clark trail, the Nez Perce Trail, and Old North Trail, while best known in the historic period, were in fact well-established prehistoric trails.

Many times archaeologists cannot conclusively identify the entire route of a trail because intensive farming, cattle trails, farm roads, railroads, highways, or housing developments have disturbed the ground surface and removed or hidden old trail scars. Often multiple kinds of evidence are needed to deduce where a trail ran. However, trail studies can provide archaeologists with insights about how people lived, moved, and interacted across the Montana landscape through time.

(adapted from *Discovering Prehistoric Trails* Leithoff, Amy & PAK Education Committee, 2004)

LESSON I

A NARRATIVE: WHAT IS ARCHAEOLOGY?

Archaeology is the study of the past through artifacts, ecofacts, and features.

If you have ever moved from one home to another, you know that you and your family left behind broken toys, outgrown clothing, and other belongings that you no longer found useful. Imagine that the next people who moved into your old house found the things you left behind. Those people could then learn something about you, and your daily life, by studying the objects you discarded. They could learn about your technology, or the tools you used. They could learn how you managed to stay alive, or subsist, by studying the foods you ate. And they could study your shelter, or home, and the protection it gave you.

Scientists today study technology, subsistence, and shelter of people from the past. This study of the tools, foods, and homes from former times is called archaeology. Archaeology is the process of discovering, interpreting, and preserving the past. The scientist who conducts these studies is called an archaeologist. Archaeologists create stories of the past through careful research. First, they find items at a specific place. Next they carefully describe those items and may take them to a laboratory. In the laboratory, the archaeologists study and analyze the items they have discovered. From this study and analysis, archaeologists can then determine a story of the past. The story will tell of the lives, movements, and survival of people, either recent or ancient, and describe their way of life. Ancient means very long ago, from the far distant past. Recent refers to modern times.

Archaeologists search for artifacts. Artifacts are the objects that people have made or used. An artifact may be a stone tool of long ago, or broken glass from the more recent past.

In addition to artifacts, archaeologists search for and study ecofacts and features. Ecofacts are items from nature that provide clues to the past. Seeds or animal bones found in a fire pit are ecofacts. Features are nonmovable things that indicate that humans have been present in a certain place. An example of a feature is soil that is discolored or stained by bacteria and mold, where a wooden post rotted in the ground. A feature may also be a place where people spent time, like a tipi ring or a fire pit. Artifacts, ecofacts, and features present definite clues that help an archaeologist re-create the past.

Courtesy Montana Historical Society- Ancient Teaching - Curriculum